

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 8-17 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 3 is hereby canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Drawing Objections

The Examiner objected to the drawings for failing to show every feature of the invention as specified in the claims.

Applicants submit this objection is moot in view of the cancellation of claim 3 by this Amendment.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to the claims for various informalities. In particular, the Examiner contends claim 1 should have an "a" before "first" and an "a" before "second". Additionally, the Examiner contends claims 16 and 17 need an "a" before "driving".

In response, Applicant submits the present claim amendments obviate this objection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 16 and 17 under § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter the applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant submits that the present amendments to the claims obviate this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 11-17 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takeshi (JP 2002-025167), or in the alternative, as obvious over Takeshi (2002)-025167 in view of Yoshida (US 4,655,662). Applicant traverses this rejection as follows.

Applicant respectfully submits that Takeshi fails to disclose, at least, "wherein said picker has a gripper which includes first and second parts which are linked to each other rotatably around an axis," as recited in claim 1.

Specifically, Takeshi discloses an auto changer which has hooks 3. These hooks 3 however, are rigid, not composed of first and second parts which are linked to each other rotatably.

Consequently, Takeshi fails to disclose all the features recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, Yoshida also fails to disclose such a feature. In particular, Yoshida discloses a gripper mechanism for feeding elongate strips which includes gripper holders 15 and 16. These gripper holders 15 and 16 are also rigid. Therefore, Yoshida also fails to disclose such a feature.

Thus, Applicant submits claim 1 is allowable for at least this reason.

Thus, Applicant submits that claim 1 is allowable for at least these reason. Additionally, Applicant submits that claims 2-3 and 11-15 are allowable, at least because of their dependency.

Further, because claims 16 and 17 recite features similar to those argued above with regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claims 16 and 17 are allowable, at least for the same reasons set forth above.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 5 and 8-10 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeshi in view of Ono (JP 03-147564). Applicant traverses this rejection as follows.

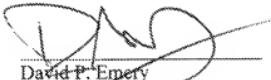
Applicant submits that because Ono, either taken alone or in combination with Takeshi, fails to compensate for the above noted deficiencies of Takeshi as applied to claim 1, that claims 4, 5 and 8-10 are allowable, at least because of their dependency.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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